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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0562
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAB/AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN PRIORITY 0031
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 0037
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 0155
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 0038
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0118
RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU PRIORITY 0056
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2795
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0812
RUEHSW/AMEMBASSY BERN PRIORITY 1224
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0259
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 5910
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 2105
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 7110
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY 0017
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1155
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 1247
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4028
RUEHOU/AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU PRIORITY 0092
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0611
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE PRIORITY 0320
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 0756
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 1952
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY 0148
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 8172
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0492
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 1487
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB PRIORITY 0028
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU PRIORITY 0386
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI PRIORITY 2221
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU PRIORITY 3550
RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY PRIORITY 0267
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY 2687
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG PRIORITY 0318
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE USD FAS WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 0761
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1691
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI PRIORITY 8678
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGKOK 004612

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP FOR LEW STERN
PARIS FOR FAS/AG MINISTER COUNSELOR/OIE
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SUBJECT: THAILAND AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE

REF: BANGKOK 4530

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¶1. Human Health: Since the death on July 24 of a 17-year-old boy from H5N1 avian influenza in Phichit Province in north-central Thailand, local public health workers have stepped up their active surveillance activities in the area. While local news reports have accentuated the increase in the number of persons being tested for avian influenza in the past few days, they have not mentioned that the increase in testing is the result of public health workers doing what they are supposed to do - seek out possible suspicious human cases in areas where there have been unusual numbers of poultry deaths.

¶2. Bangkok-based CDC personnel maintain daily contact with officials at the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH). MOPH has told them that in recent days, more than 50 persons who displayed flu-like symptoms have tested negative for the H5N1 virus, but positive for the common seasonal H1 influenza virus. This is not unexpected, they said, since Thailand is currently at the height of its rainy season, when the numbers of common influenza cases peak. Laboratory testing is still pending on at least another 40 human samples, but an increase in the numbers of people being tested is not cause for alarm in itself - it is evidence that the avian influenza surveillance system is working.

¶3. In other human health news, the MOPH told CDC personnel today that testing at its central laboratory in Bangkok of two samples taken from the 17-year-old boy who died confirmed that he was infected with the H5N1 virus. The earlier, presumptive testing was performed at the Phichit provincial

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hospital.

¶4. Animal Health: Surveillance and testing of poultry continues, as well. Embassy's Regional Environmental and Health Officer (REO) spoke today with Dr. Nalinee at the Avian Flu Center at the Department of Livestock Development (DLD) in Bangkok and also with the head of the Lower Northern Regional Veterinary Research and Development Center in Phitsanulok Province where a single fighting cock tested positive for H5N1 virus on July 24. The head of the laboratory in Phitsanulok Province said they have performed more than 100 tests in recent days on more than 500 birds, but that all of the tests have been negative with the exception of the single sample that tested positive on July 24.

¶5. In reply to a question by REO, Dr. Nalinee stated that DLD routinely pools specimens, but combines material from no more than five birds at a time for testing - well within the 5-10 sample batch recommended by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). She also said that the DLD is sampling ducks, which are known to be able to carry H5N1 asymptomatically, as well as chickens and fighting cocks, but they have all tested negative so far.

¶6. Dr. Nalinee did not say whether she believed all the recent chicken die-offs in the central and north-central provinces were attributable to a resurgence of the H5N1 virus in Thailand. The virus is present, however, and only further surveillance and continued testing will demonstrate the extent of it.
ARVIZU